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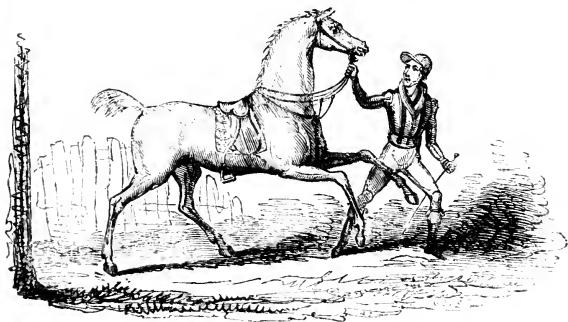
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THE
HIGH-METTLED RACER.

BY THE LATE
CHARLES DIBDIN.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED
MANY INTERESTING ANECDOTES OF THE RACE-HORSE.

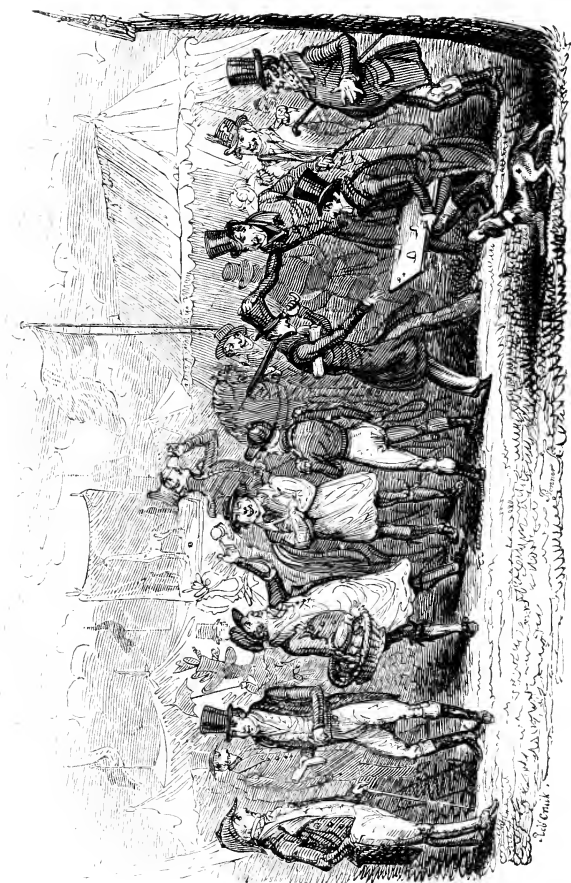
Illustrated by Ten First-rate Engravings on Wood,
BY G. W. BONNER.
FROM DESIGNS BY ROBERT CRUIKSHANK.



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MDCCCXXXI.

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.



THE
HIGH-METTLED RACER.

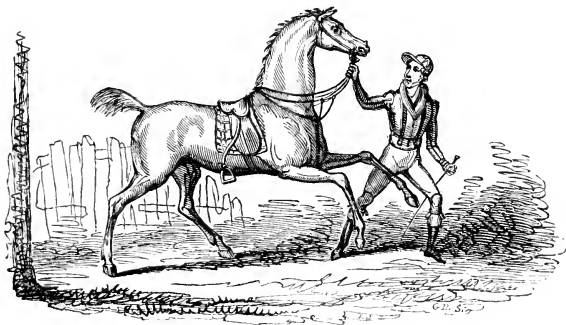
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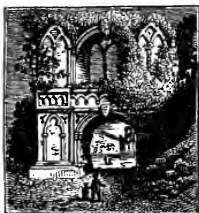
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"Even the *letters* in the black title-page are of an infernal order of typography."—*Chat of the Week*.

303.12

TO THE READER.



RESUMING it would give an additional interest to this little ballad, application has been made to Andrew Ducrow, Esq. for permission to take a sketch, *from life*, of his celebrated Hanoverian horse BRIGAND, who originally performed the principal character in the entertainment called "THE HIGH-

METTLED RACER ; or, *the Life, Death, and Restoration of the favorite Hunter.*"

The *restoration* was added by particular desire, many persons regretting that so beautiful an animal should meet with so untimely an end. In the representation on the stage, therefore, recourse was had to enchantment, and from the apparently lifeless body (which sank down through a trap) arose another beautiful animal, richly caparisoned, and surrounded by Fairies.

THE HIGH-METTLED RACER is a true copy from the original, with a single exception—viz. his *tail*, which instead of being, as in the original, a long one, has had some few inches *docked off*.

The publisher takes this opportunity of expressing his thanks to Mr. Ducrow, for his great politeness in not only giving him free access to his stables, but for his personal attention, in seeing that the horses were exhibited in the Circle, and shown in every attitude that could be of service to the artist.

The beautiful order in which the stables are kept, reflects great credit on the management. The names of the different horses are affixed to each stall, and the whole are under the care of Mr. Richard Valler, (formerly postillion to Queen Charlotte), a very civil and obliging gentleman.

Some idea may be formed of the extent of this Establishment, when it is stated that more than ninety horses appeared at one time upon the stage, in the celebrated "Battle of Waterloo."

The anecdotes of Race Horses (at the end of the book) are extracted from a very clever and a very valuable work, entitled "Biographical Sketches and Authentic Anecdotes of Horses," by CAPTAIN THOMAS BROWN, Author of "Authentic Anecdotes of Dogs,"—both of which volumes have been spoken of in terms of the highest praise.

Nov. 28, 1830.

The High-Mettled Racer.

I.

SEE the course throng'd with gazers; the sports
are begun,

The confusion, but hear!—I'll bet you, Sir,—
done, done!

Ten thousand strange murmurs resound far
and near;

Lords, hawkers, and jockeys, assail the tired
ear:—

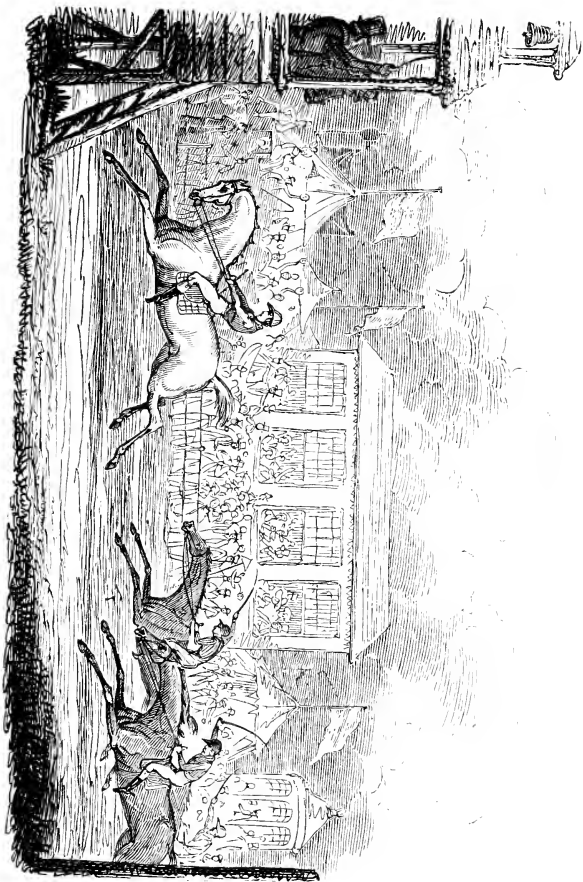
II.

While with neck like a rainbow, erecting his
crest,

Pamper'd, prancing, and pleas'd, his head
touching his breast,

Scarcely snuffing the air, he's so proud and
elate,

The High-Mettled Racer first starts for the
plate.





III.

Now Renard's turn'd out ; and o'er hedge and
ditch rush,

Hounds, horses, and huntsmen, all hard at
his brush ;

They run him at length, and they have him at
bay,

And by scent and by view, cheat a long te-
dious way :—

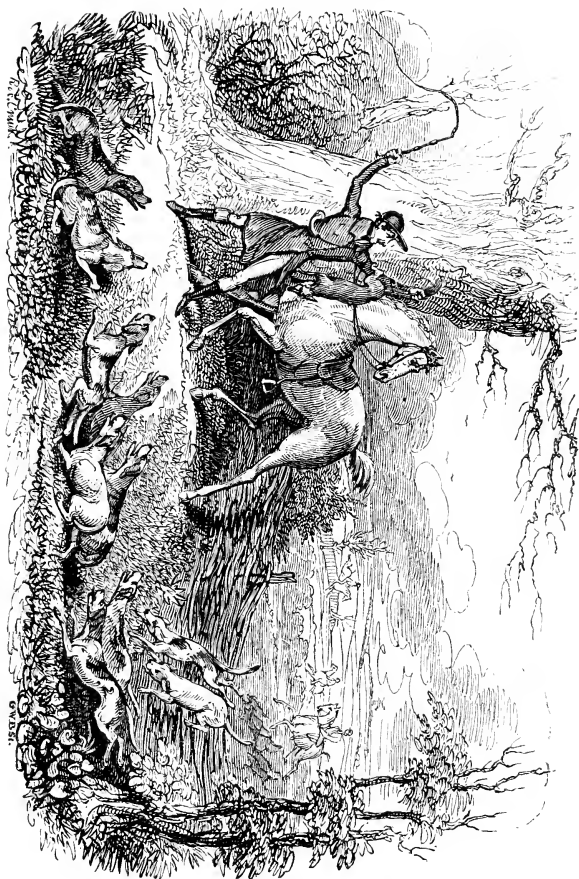
I V.

While, alike born for sports of the field and
the course,

Always sure to come thorough, a staunch and
fleet horse ;—

When fairly run down, the fox yields up his
breath,

The High-Mettled Racer is in at the death.



v.

Grown aged, us'd up, and turn'd out of the
stud,

Lame, spavin'd, and wind-gall'd, but yet with
some blood ;

While knowing postilions his pedigree trace,

Tell his dam won this sweepstakes, his sire
gain'd that race ;—

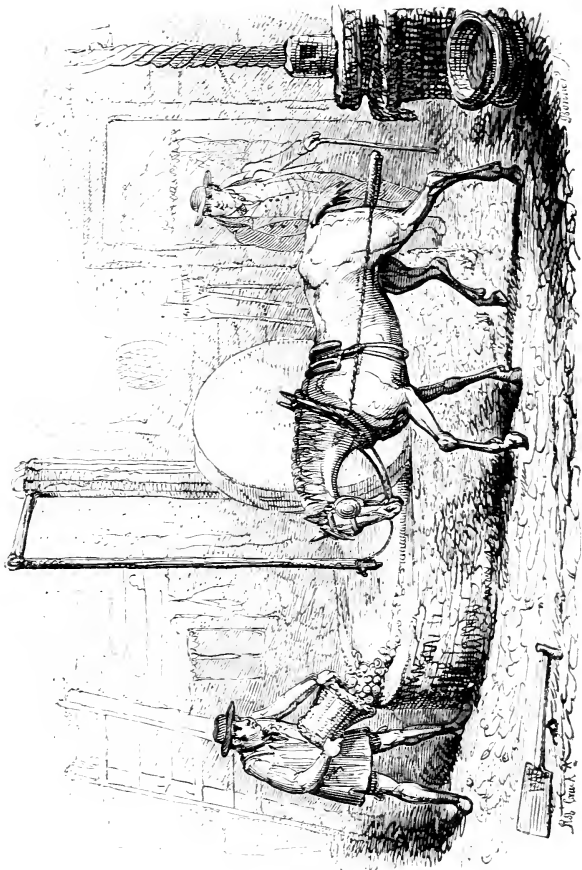
VI.

And what matches he won to the ostlers count
o'er,

As they loiter their time at some hedge ale-
house door ;

While the harness sore galls, and the spurs
his sides goad,

The High-Mettled Racer's a hack on the road.



VII.

Till at last having labour'd, drudg'd early
and late,

Bow'd down by degrees, he bends on to his
fate ;

Elind, old, lean, and feeble, he tugs round a
mill,

Or draws sand, till the sand of his hour-glass
stands still.

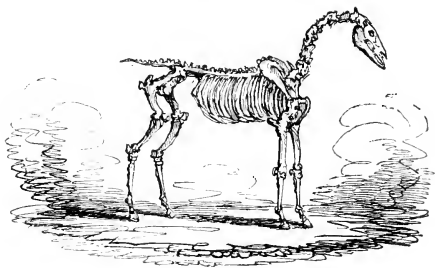
VIII.

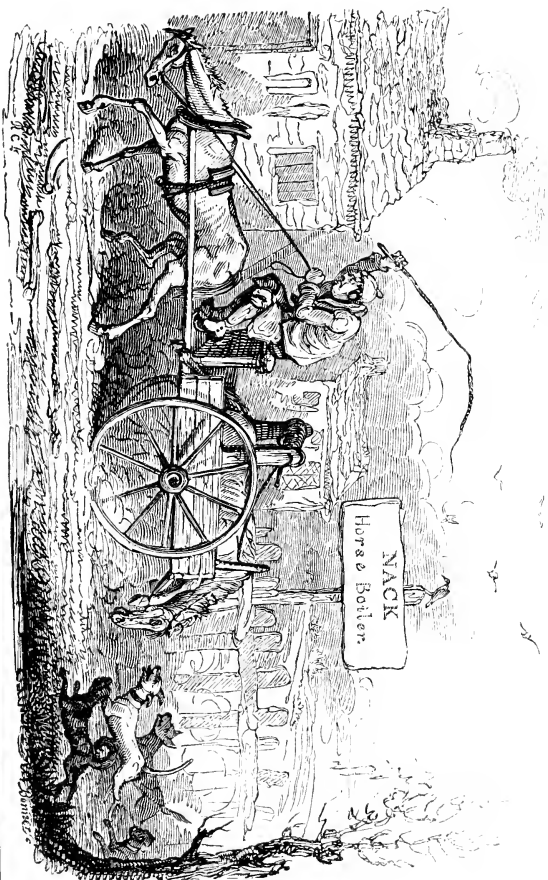
And now, cold and lifeless, expos'd to the
view,

In the very same cart which he yesterday
drew,

While a pitying crowd his sad relics sur-
rounds,

The *High-Mettled Racer* is sold for the
hounds.





THE
FOLLOWING INTERESTING

Anecdotes of the Race-Horse,

ARE EXTRACTED FROM
CAPTAIN THOMAS BROWN'S
"BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF HORSES."

MR. QUIN'S WICKED HORSE.

In the year 1753, Mr. Quin had a famous racer, who entered into the spirit of the course as much as his master. One day, finding his opponent gradually passing him, he seized him by the legs, and both riders were obliged to dismount, in order to separate the infuriated animals, who were engaged with each other in the most deadly conflict: they were got apart with much difficulty.

FORRESTER.

Forrester had won many a hardly contested race; at length over-weighed and over-matched, the rally had commenced. His adversary, who had been waiting behind, was quickly gaining upon him; he reared, and eventually got abreast; they continued so till within the distance. They were parallel; but the strength of For-

rester began to fail him. He made a last desperate plunge ; seized his adversary by the jaw to hold him back ; and it was with great difficulty he could be forced to quit his hold. Forrester, however, lost the race.

THE FLYING CHILDERS.

This horse was well known by the name of the Flying, or Devonshire, Childers. He was the property of the Duke of Devonshire, and allowed, by sportsmen, to be the fleetest horse that ever was bred in the world. He started repeatedly at Newmarket against the best horses of his time, and was never beaten. He won, in different prizes, to the amount of nearly £20,000, and was afterwards reserved for breeding. The sire of Childers was an Arabian, sent by a gentleman as a present to his brother in England. Childers was somewhat more than fifteen hands in height. He was foaled in 1715, and was the property of Leonard Childers, Esq. of Carr House, near Doncaster, and sold when young to the Duke of Devonshire.

Childers was got by the Darley Arabian ; his dam, Betty Leedes, by Old Careless ; his grand-dam own sister to Leedes, by Leedes's Arabian ; his great-grand-dam by Spanker, out of the Old Morocco mare, Spanker's own dam. The affinities in blood of this pedigree are very close.

It is said that Childers was first used as a hunter, where he evinced high qualities, and was noted for being

very headstrong, as well as vicious. He had not, however, any restiveness. It is supposed his racing career commenced at five or six, and he beat all competitors at whatever distance. He was never tried at running a single mile, but his speed must have been almost a mile in a minute. Carrying nine stone, two pounds, he ran over the round course at Newmarket, which is three miles six furlongs and ninety-three yards, in six minutes and forty seconds. He also ran over the Beacon course, which is four miles one furlong and one hundred and thirty eight yards, in seven minutes and thirty seconds; covering at every bound a space of about twenty-five yards. On one occasion he made a spring or leap, with his rider on his back, on level ground, of twenty-five feet.

Childers died in the Duke of Devonshire's stud in 1741, aged twenty-six years.

MARSK.

Marsk, the brown horse, was foaled in 1750, and so named from the place where he was bred; he was the property of John Hutton, Esq. of Marsk, Yorkshire, who afterwards sold him to the Duke of Cumberland; he was got by Squirt, son of Bartlett's Childers, out of the Raby mare, which was from a daughter of Bay Bolton, and Hutton's Black Legs, Fox Cub, Coneyskins, Hutton's Gray Barb, a daughter of Hutton's Royal Colt, a daughter of Byerley Turk, from a Bustler mare. This is one

of the highest of our pedigrees, going back as far as the reign of Charles I. In the year 1750, the Duke of Cumberland made an exchange of a chesnut Arabian with Mr. Hutton, for the colt, which his Royal Highness afterwards named Marsk.

Marsk beat Brilliant, so that he must have been an excellent racer ; but he was extremely uncertain. He only ran five times, and these were at Newmarket. As a breeding horse, he was esteemed but as little worth by the Duke, and was, in consequence, sold to a farmer, at the sale of the stud of his Royal Highness at Tattersall's, for a trifling sum. After which, he was bought by Mr. Wildman, as he judged it prudent to be possessed of the sire of such a colt as Eclipse turned out to be, and obtained him from the farmer, for the small sum of £20, who thought himself well rid of a bad bargain. He afterwards became most excellent as a breeder, and his fame will be handed down to the latest posterity. He has been styled the "Prince of Horses." He was the sire of Eclipse, Shark, Pretender, Honest Kitt, Masquerade, Leviathan, Salopian, and Pontac. Shark won £16,067 in matches, &c. beating the best horses of his day whether in point of speed or bottom.

KING HEROD.

King Herod was a bay horse, of about fifteen hands, three inches high ; he was a steed of great substance, length, and power. His figure was uncommonly symme-

trical. He was bred by William Duke of Cumberland, and foaled in 1758. He was got by Tartar, the son of Croft's Partner, who was one of the finest racers, out of Meliora by Fox. Partner, was got by Jig, son of the famous Byerley Turk. Cypron, King Herod's dam, was got by Blaze, a son of Flying Childers, and son of Sampson, Scrub, and others, out of Sir William St. Quintin's Selima, a black mare, and true runner, got by the Bethell Arabian, and of the high lineage of Champion, the Darley Arabian, and Old Merlin.

Herod was not brought on the turf till he was five years old. He never ran any where but at Newmarket, Ascot Heath, and York, and on all occasions over the course, or four miles; his *forte* being stoutness or bottom and with physical powers, which enabled him to carry weight. He started five times for thousand-guinea races, and gained three of them. This famous horse has been sire to some of our best racers; and his numerous progeny have unitedly gained a very large sum of money. In nineteen years, from 1771 to 1789, four hundred and ninety-seven of his sons and daughters won, for their proprietors; in plates, matches, and sweepstakes, the sum of £201,505 9s. exclusive of some thousands won between 1774 and 1786. Herod was sire to the celebrated Highflyer, bred by Sir Charles Bunbury. His foals were free from restiveness, with one exception, which was Mr. Vernon's Prince. This horse was sometimes run at Newmarket, and other places, with a prickly

bridle. Herod was sire to the following celebrated race horses:—Anvil, Alexis, Balance, Drone, Evergreen, Frowzel, Fortitude, Guildford, Gleaner, Highflyer, Justice, Il'nuo, Laburnum, Latona, Magnet, Monk, Nebuchadnezzar, Orange, Pontifax, Postmaster, Perve, Phenomenon, Perdita, Spectre, Tuberoze, Telemachus, Weazel, and Woodpecker.

King Herod died at Newmarket, on the 12th May, 1780, aged twenty-one years.

ECLIPSE.

ECLIPSE was allowed to be the fleetest horse that ever ran in England, since the time of Childers. After winning king's plates, and other prizes, to a great amount, he was kept as a stallion, and gained to his owner, for forty mares, the great sum of thirty guineas each.

Eclipse was got by Marsk, a grandson, through Squirt, of Bartlett's Childers, out of Spiletta, by Regulus, son of the Godolphin Barb out of Mother Western, by a son of Snake, full brother to Williams's Squirrel; her dam by Old Montague, grandson by Hautboy, out of a daughter of Brimmer, whose pedigree was not preserved. Eclipse was bred by the Duke of Cumberland, and foaled during the great eclipse of 1764, whence the name given him by the royal duke; at the sale of whose stud he was purchased, a colt, for seventy-five guineas, by Mr. Wildman, the sporting sheep salesman at

Smithfield, who had a good stud, and trained race-horses, at Mickleham, near Epsom. This person had a friend in the service of the duke, who gave him a hint of the superior points in the form of this horse, and he hastened to attend the sale ; but, before his arrival, he had been knocked down at seventy guineas. He, however, instantly appealed to his watch, which he knew to be an exceedingly correct time-piece ; he found that the appointed hour of sale had not yet arrived by a few minutes, according to advertisement. He then firmly persisted that the sale had not been a lawful one, and that the lots knocked down should be again put up, which was accordingly done, and Eclipse was purchased by him for the sum of seventy-five guineas.

For what reason, we have never been able to learn, this celebrated horse was never raced till he was five years of age, at which time he was entered at Epsom for the maiden plate of fifty pounds. At first trial, such were the expectations of the knowing ones, that four to one were betted in his favour. At the second and winning heat of this race, all the five horses were close together at the three-mile-post, when some of the jockeys used their whips. At this time Eclipse was going at an easy gallop, when he took alarm at the crack of the whip, bounded off at his full speed ; and although Oakley, his rider, was a man of powerful arm, he was not to be restrained, and, in consequence, distanced the whole of his competitors.

In the year 1770, Eclipse ran over the course at York, for the subscription purse, against two aged horses then in high repute, Tortoise and Bellario. He took the lead, and the jockey being unable to hold him in, he was fully a distance before the other two horses at the end of the first two miles, and won the race with the greatest ease. At starting, twenty, and, in running, one hundred guineas to one were offered on him.

Before Eclipse ran for the King's Plate at Winchester, in 1769, Mr. O'Kelly purchased the half share of him for six hundred and fifty guineas. He afterwards became his sole proprietor for an additional sum of one thousand guineas. It is said that some of the Bedford family asked O'Kelly, in 1779, how much he would take for Eclipse, when he replied, "By the mass, my Lord, it is not all Bedford level that would purchase him." It is said that, about this period, he asked from another person the modest sum of £25,000 down, and an annuity of £500 a-year on his own life; and the privilege of sending to him annually six mares. Mr. O'Kelly said he had cleared by this horse £25,000, and his statement is supposed to be correct.

Eclipse seemed to combine all the qualities which constitute an excellent racer; his stoutness, form, and action, were excellent; he had a vast stride, and certainly never horse threw his haunches below him with more vigour or effect; and his hind legs were so spread in his gallop, "that a wheelbarrow might have been

driven between them ; " his agility was great, and his speed extraordinary, but we cannot estimate it justly, as no horse of his day could be compared to him. The only contemporary which was supposed at all equal to him was Mr. Shaftoe's famous horse Goldfinder. He was never beaten, and was to have been matched against Eclipse for the king's plates on the following year, but he broke down at Newmarket in the October meeting.

Eclipse won eleven king's plates, in ten of which he carried twelve stone, and in the other ten. It was calculated, that within the course of twenty-three years, three hundred and forty-four winners, the progeny of this animal, produced to their owners the enormous sum of £158,071 12s. sterling, exclusive of various prizes. The prevailing excellence of all this horse's progeny was great speed, and they took up their feet in the gallop with wonderful activity ; they were not generally famed for stoutness, but almost all of them were horses of fine temper, seldom or never betraying restiveness.

The points of Eclipse to which I would particularly direct the attention of the breeder and sportsman are, the curve or setting-on of his head, the shortness of his fore-quarter, the slant, extent, and substance of his shoulders, the length of his waist, and breadth of his loins ; the extent of his quarters, and the length and substance of his thighs and fore-arms. Although he was a powerful horse, he was nevertheless thick in the wind ; and in a sweat or hard exercise, he was heard to

blow at a considerable distance. This famous horse died on the 27th February, 1789, at Canons, aged 26 years. His heart was taken out, and it weighed 14 lbs.

MR. GIRDWOOD'S HORSE.

1750, September 1st. There was a race at Epsom between Mr. Girdwood's horse Crop, and a roan horse of Mr. Harris's. Crop was to go one hundred miles before the roan went eighty; the match was for one hundred guineas. They started about half-past six in the morning. Crop ran ten times round the course, which is twenty miles, in about an hour and a minute, and going round the eleventh time was almost knocked up. The other horse was also so tired as not to be able to make even a trot, so that they walked the course with their riders on their backs, people going before them with a bowl of oats and a lock of hay to entice them on; and by the time Mr. Harrison's horse had gone eighty miles, Crop had gone ninety-four, so that he lost by six miles. Crop was sold immediately after this race for five guineas to Mr. Skinner, who kept him till he died, which was eight years, during which time he won Mr. Skinner £500 in different matches.

EXTRAORDINARY FEAT.

On the 15th of August, 1792, to decide a wager of

£50 between Mr. Cooper and Mr. Brewer of Stamford, the latter gentleman's horse Labourer, ran twenty times round the race ground (exactly a mile) at Preston, in fifty-four minutes.

HAIR-BREADTH ESCAPE.

In the first week of December, 1825, a blood mare, fifteen hands one inch high, with the rider, who stood five feet three inches high, belonging to J. Wright, Esq. was frightened, and ran away, full speed, from the Sand-hills into Parliament Street, and, in the attempt to guide her towards the forest, a cart being in the way, the animal dashed into the passage of the Peach-Tree public house, the entrance door to which is six feet eight inches high, and two feet eight inches wide, the passage is eighteen feet long, and three feet ten inches wide, and in it were three barrels, three feet high, and other brewing vessels, which the mare leaped over; and across the centre of it, a beam eight feet from the floor; and in front, twelve feet from the last door, is the wall of a court to the left, twenty feet long, so full of brewing utensils, &c. that the mare had just room to stand between them; yet, strange to tell, the animal did not fall, or receive the slightest injury, or do the least damage of any kind. The rider sat till the mare stopped; he was only very slightly grazed on the back of the head, and on one knee, which, all the circumstances considered, is one of

the most extraordinary feats and hair-breadth escapes ever recorded.

MR. ASTLEY'S BARB.

Mr. Astley, junior, of the Royal Amphitheatre, Westminster Bridge, once had in his possession, a remarkably fine Barbary horse, forty-three years of age, which was presented to him by the Duke of Leeds. This celebrated animal, for a number of years, officiated in the character of a waiter, in the course of the performances at the Amphitheatre, and at various other theatres in the United Kingdom. At the request of his master, he has been seen to bring into the riding school, a tea table and its appendages, which feat has been followed up by fetching a chair, or stool, or what else soever might be wanted. His achievements generally terminated by taking a kettle of boiling water from a fire, which blazed considerably, to the wonder and admiration of every beholder.





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